

**Gifted education in Hong Kong:
perceptions of teachers, parents and experts.**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

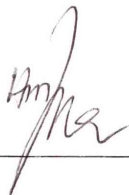
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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text. I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MA, Hon Ming', is written over a horizontal line.

MA, Hon Ming

9 March, 2010

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ABSTRACT

This study appears to be the first of its kind to adopt a comprehensive multi-pronged approach to investigate the perceptions of trained teachers, general school teachers and parents about gifted education in Hong Kong. The study also involved the input of local experts from multiple disciplines, who contributed their local, expert comments on the findings and gave their expert opinion about how gifted education might be further developed in Hong Kong. The significance of the research is to provide a better understanding of the factors that underpin the effective implementation of gifted education in Hong Kong and how the educational needs of gifted students in the future may be better served.

The methodological research approach was mainly empirical analytic. The subjects included trained teachers of gifted education, general school teachers with no prior gifted education training, local parents and five local experts of gifted education in Hong Kong. The 101 subjects were all obtained by convenience samples of volunteered participants. The research instruments developed, involved three separate sets of gifted education survey questionnaires: one was for use with both the general school teachers and trained teachers, another one for use with the parents and a third questionnaire for experts, during their semi-structured interviews with the researcher. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained from the samples.

The study revealed a fairly low awareness about the common characteristics of the gifted and their possible learning disabilities, of general school teachers and parents as compared with trained teachers. It also revealed a somewhat low awareness in each group about the Hong Kong Government policy as well as the operation of gifted education in Hong Kong schools.

More specifically, the critical factors used by the three respondent groups to initiate a referral of suspected gifted student for confirmatory assessment included, “highly creative”, “superior in mathematical reasoning ability” and “intellectual curiosity”. The education practices that each group perceived as helpful for identifying gifted students and as helpful for teaching/assisting and developing gifted students were described and discussed. The respondent groups’ perception of the common progress and hindrances to gifted education and of how teachers and parents can help in the education of gifted students were also discussed. The views of local experts in gifted education about this study’s findings and how the education needs of gifted / learning disabled students would be better served were then examined and discussed.

The thesis also examines the issues concerned with practical recommendations about the effective implementation of future school-based gifted education in Hong Kong and how the educational needs of gifted students may be better served.